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THE BALLAD OF THE CRUEL MOOR.

A LAMENTABLE Ballad of the Tragical End of a Gallant Lord and Virtuous Lady: together with the untimely Death of their two Children; wickedly performed by a Heathenish and Blood-thirsty Black-a-Moor, their Servant; the like of which Cruelty and Murther was never heard of before.

To the Tune of *The Lady's Fall*, etc.

In *Rome* a Nobleman did wed
 A Virgin of great Fame,
 A fairer Creature never did
 Dame Nature ever frame;
 By whom he had two Children fair,
 Whose Beauty did excel;
 They were their Parents only Joy,
 They lov'd them both so well.

The Lord he lov'd to hunt the Buck,
 The Tyger and the Boar;
 And still for Swiftmess always took
 With him a Black-a-Moor;
 Which Black-a-Moor within the Wood
 His Lord he did offend;
 For which he did him then correct,
 In hopes he would amend.

The Day it grew unto an end,
 Then homewards he did haste,
 Where with his Lady he did rest,
 Until the Night was past.
 Then in the Morning he did rise,
 And did his Servants call,
 A hunting he provides to go,
 Straight they were ready all.

To cause¹ the Toyl the Lady did
 Intreat him not to go :
 Alas, good Lady, then quoth he,
 Why art thou grieved so ?
 Content thy self, I will return
 With speed to thee again,
 Good Father, quoth the little Babes,
 With us here still remain.

Farewel, dear Children, I will go
 A fine thing for to buy,
 But they therewith nothing content,
 Aloud began to cry :
 The Mother takes them by the Hand,
 Saying, *Come, go with me*
Unto the highest Tower, where
Your Father you shall see.

The Black-a-Moor perceiving now,
 Who then did stay behind,
 His Lord to be a hunting gone,
 Began to call to mind,
 My Master he did me correct,
 My Fault not being great ;
 Now of his Wife I'll be reveng'd,
 She shall not me intreat.

The Place was moted round about,
 The Bridge he up did draw ;
 The Gates he bolted very fast,
 Of none he stood in Awe.
 He up into the Tower went,
 The Lady being there,
 Who when she saw his Countenance grim,
 She straight began to fear.

But now my trembling Heart it quakes
 To think what I must write,
 My Sences all begin to fail,
 My Soul it doth affright :

¹ For *cease*? Chappell in *R. B.* suggests *leave*.

Yet must I make an end of this,
Which here I have begun,
Which will make sad the hardest Heart,
Before that I have done.

This Wretch unto the Lady went,
And her with speed did will,
His Lust forthwith to satisfy,
His Mind for to fulfill :
The Lady she amazed was,
To hear the Villain speak ;
Alas, quoth she, what shall I do ?
With Grief my Heart will break.

With that he took her in his arms,
She straight for Help did cry :
Content yourself, Lady, he said,
Your Husband is not nigh :
The Bridge is drawn, the Gates are shut,
Therefore come lye with me,
Or else I do protest and vow,
Thy Butcher I will be.

The crystal Tears ran down her Face,
Her Children cry'd amain,
And sought to help their Mother dear,
But all it was in vain ;
For that egregious filthy Rogue,
Her Hands behind her bound,
And then perforce with all his might,
He threw her on the ground.

With that she shriek'd, her Children cry'd
And such a Noise did make,
That Town-folks hearing her Laments,
Did seek their parts to take :
But all in vain, no way was found
To help the Lady's need,
Who cry'd to them most piteously,
O help, O help with speed.

Some run into the Forest wide,
Her Lord home for to call ;
And they that stood still did lament
This gallant Lady's Fall.
With speed her Lord came posting home,
He could not enter in,
His Lady's Cries did pierce his Heart,
To call he did begin.

O hold thy Hand, thou savage Moor,
To hurt her do forbear,
Or else besure if I do live,
Wild Horses shall thee tear.
With that the Rogue ran to the Wall,
He having had his Will,
And brought one Child under his Arm,
His dearest Blood to spill.

The Child seeing his Father there,
To him for help did call ;
O Father help my Mother dear,
We shall be killed all.
Then fell the Lord upon his Knee,
And did the Moor intreat,
To save the Life of this poor Child,
Whose Fear was then so great.

But this vile Wretch the little Child
By both the Heels did take,
And dash'd his Brains against the Wall,
Whilst Parents Hearts did ake :
That being done straightway he ran
The other Child to fetch,
And pluck'd it from the Mother's Breast
Most like a cruel Wretch.

Within one Hand a Knife he brought,
The Child within the other ;
And holding it over the Wall
Saying, thus shall dye thy Mother ;

With that he cut the Throat of it,
Then to the Father he did call,
To look how he the Head did cut,
And down the Head did fall.

This done, he threw it down the Wall,
Into the Mote so deep ;
Which made the Father wring his Hands.
And grievously to weep :
Then to the Lady went this Rogue,
Who was near dead with fear,
Yet this vile Wretch most cruelly
Did drag her by the Hair.

And drew her to the very Wall
Which when her Lord did see ;
Then presently he cryed out,
And fell upon his Knee,
Quoth he, if thou wilt save her Life,
Whom I do love so dear ;
I will forgive thee all is past
Though they concern me near.

O save her Life I thee beseech ;
O save her I thee pray,
And I will grant thee what thou wilt
Demand of me this Day.
Well, quoth the Moor, I do regard
The Moan that thou dost make :
If thou wilt grant me what I ask,
I'll save her for thy sake.

O save her Life and then demand
Of me what thing thou wilt :
Cut off thy Nose, and not one drop
Of her Blood shall be spilt.
With that the Lord presently took
A Knife within his Hand,
And then his Nose he quite cut off,
In place where he did stand.

Now I have bought my Lady's Life,
 He to the Moor did call :
 Then take her, quoth this wicked Rogue,
 And down he let her fall,
 Which when her Gallant Lord did see
 His Sences all did fail ;
 Yet many sought to save his Life,
 But nothing could prevail.

When as the Moor did see him Dead,
 Then did he laugh amain,
 At them who for their Gallant Lord
 And Lady did complain :
 Quoth he, I know you'll torture me,
 If that you can me get,
 But all your threats I do not fear,
 Nor yet regard one whit.

Wild Horses shall my Body tear,
 I know it to be true,
 But I'll prevent you of that pain :
 And down himself he threw,
 Too good a Death for such a Wretch,
 A Villain void of fear ;
 And thus doth end as sad a Tale,
 As ever Man did hear.

The ballad of *The Lady and the Blackamoor*, or *The Cruel Moor*, referred to by Fuller in his study on the sources of *Titus Andronicus*, *Publ. of the Mod. Lang. Association* 16, 1 ff., is also to be found in vol. 2, p. 152 ff. of *A. Collection of Old Ballads*, London, 1726, as stated by Chappell, *Roxburghe Ballads*, 2, 48. As neither the *R. B.* nor any of the older prints are likely to be in the hands of many of our readers, the text is reprinted here from *O. B.*, and a few words concerning this collection may also be of interest. In Halkett and Laing's *Dictionary of the Anonymous and Pseudonymous Literature of Great Britain* Wheatley ascribes it to Ambrose Phillips, and so does W. Cushing in his *Anonyms*. It consists of three vols., which were

sold' by D. Leach in the Old Bailey for nine shillings. The collection enjoyed the generous encouragement of persons of high and highest rank, and a new edition could be started at once. 'Though we printed a large Edition for such a Trifle, and in less than Two Months Time put it to the Press again, yet could we not get our Second Edition out before it was really wanted. . . . My Thanks are in a particular Manner due to a Gentleman, who deserves the Thanks of every true Englishman. . . . I wish I durst name him, but I had rather deny myself that Honour and Pleasure, than offend'; this from the preface to vol. 2, and in that to vol. 3 we read: 'History, especially our own, has for many Years been too much neglected, and the generality of English-Men are such strangers to ancient Facts and the Customs of their Kingdom, that they are easily misled by any Sixpenny Pamphleteer; and indeed I was once afraid that this Study wou'd be utterly discarded and contemn'd; but those Fears are entirely vanish'd, since the wisest of Monarchs . . . has thought fit to encourage it in so Royal a manner.' The collection contains a goodly proportion of historical or otherwise valuable ballads² bearing testimony to the seriousness of the editor's purpose, as indicated in his motto on the title page of vol. 2: *Celebrare Domestica facta*. When he speaks lightly of his collection as of 'such a Trifle,' he must not be taken too seriously; he fully realizes the value of his ballads, and, indeed, his enthusiasm for the 'Old Bards' leads him, again in his preface to vol. 2, to the following characteristic statement: 'Had the Writers in Question ow'd all to Learning, and nothing to Nature, we should frequently in our Ballads, instead of that remarkable Simplicity, have met with stiff Pedantry; whilst on the other Hand, had not the Genius been

¹ Thus an advertising page at the close of vol. 2 of the second edition informs us.

² Several of these do not seem to have found their way into other collections; however, I cannot yet speak positively on this point, but expect to return to the subject in the near future, and to give an account of the material, so far as it may have escaped the attention of modern scholars.

improved by Learning, we should have seen the Writer often limping and falling from a bold Flight to a low Conceit; and perhaps, with the noblest Sentiments mixing a wretched Pun; a Thing too frequently to be met with in the Works of Shakespear and Davenant.'

Our ballad of *The Cruel Moor* is not, like most others, preceded by an 'Introduction Historical and Critical.' It will be seen, that the text differs only slightly from that in *Roxburghe Ballads*, 2, 48 ff.

GUSTAF E. KARSTEN.